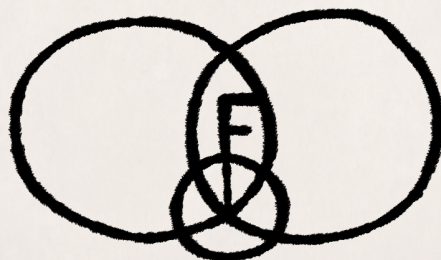




WELCOME TO FROM FICTIONFOLK

This is a zine about and for those who have a genuine fiction-based identity, such as those who are fictionkin, and everything that comes with such an identity. The theme of this zine is 'autobiography and personal experience', and, thus, aims to show things beautiful, heartbreaking, and magical about fictionfolk experience.

The name of this zine is inspired by the old "From Fiction" fictionkin forums; one of the first community meeting places specifically intended for fictionfolk. However, instead of it meaning, "We are from fiction," as the forum name did, it means, in this context, "All of these pieces are from fictionfolk / fictionkind." By referencing the past, we hope to stay connected to it and remember it, while also representing the lives and feelings of modern fictionfolk.



Being Fictionkin : Obscure vs Popular Sources

This piece will focus on a part of being fictionkin that I think is sometimes overlooked in the fictionkin community: being from an obscure source.

In the short year I have spent in this diverse community, I have become more and more familiar with being fictionkin and the surrounding experiences, and have found that it can be frustrating when you come from an obscure source and cannot find sourcemates, especially if there's that one person you so desperately need to talk to. This is written from my experiences of being from many different sources, from mainstream anime series, to original characters (OCs), to other not-so-well-known books and media.

Even being fictionkin in itself is a very broad experience. No one's is exactly the exact same as anyone else's. There are infinite timeline possibilities, such as being from alternate universes or being strictly from the canon of your source. Non-canon kintypes may have an even harder time finding canonmates, and even just finding people who remember them can be difficult or almost impossible. Many people have clear memories from their kintypes, whereas many may have no memories at all. As I said earlier, no one has the same experience.

Considering this, in the time I have spent searching for my canonmates from a particular source, I *have* managed to find those who share the same memories as me. But one thing led to another and we realised that because we had differing memories of a rather big (and non-canon) turning point from our timelines, we weren't actually *canon* canonmates. However, we have kept in contact and decided to continue our searches separately. I think it's also worth mentioning that our source is a very well-known series, and I have not been able to find anyone with the same recollection of this event since. My point in mentioning this here is that even when you come from a popular and mainstream series, it can be hard to find people.

Of course, there are also those who do not want to interact with sourcemates, search for canonmates, or perhaps dislike and reject their source altogether.

As someone who is also OCKin, it's difficult for me to know that my entire universe - my home, all my friends and loved ones, and all the adventures we had - exists only in my head. Of course, there is a small chance that someone out there also remembers my world and my friends, but I highly doubt I would find them, even with the help of the internet.

Something that will limit this chance of being able to meet canonmates even further is when you are from an obscure source or OCKin. If you come from a source

with a very small number of fans or followers, it can be particularly disheartening. No one has heard of you. No one knows your source. You can't find anyone.

On the other hand, when you come from a fairly well-known medium, the number of people who *also* come from that medium can be overwhelming. If you are uncomfortable with doubles - those who are the same character as you - it can be even more difficult.

However, it's not all bad. Great things can come from being from both more unknown sources and those more famed sources.

If you come from a smaller medium, for example, this can lead to greater closeness with your sourcemates, even if you do not have the same canon as them. It might be easier to connect with them, and if you enjoy discussing your source, it can lead to great conversations.

If you are from a more popular source, you can do the same things, it's just easier to find people to interact with. Yes, you are more likely to find canonmates, but the number of other things you can do, in the end, outweighs that fact.

Overall, there's no one way to group together the experiences of obscure kintypes, or kintypes in general. All we can do is help one another out and share the events and circumstances with each other. Everyone has their own happenings and how they choose to share them - or not, and find those whom they shared memories with, is entirely up to them.

- plutomelon, 2022

The Transformation Potion : On Choosing Once, and Never Again

“This I choose to do. If there is a price, this I choose to pay. If it is my death, then I choose to die. Where this takes me, there I choose to go. I choose. This I choose to do.” –Terry Pratchett, Wintersmith

The definition of otherkin has been debated as long as the word has existed, since it first appeared in the *Elfinkind Digest*. But the things everyone can agree upon is that to be otherkin is to identify as something other than what you physically are on a level of species. To be otherkin is to *be*. Not just to wish something to be true within one's head, but to *be*, down to the bone and spirit and mind. But to create a community on the idea of *being* is difficult. The only thing that holds all of us together is that we *are*, but what we *are* is not always the same. And when all we have to go on that someone else *is*, that they are similar to us, is their word, then the question must be asked: how do we know they simply do not wish to be like us, that they're not lying when they say they *are*?

It's a common sentiment that you cannot choose to be otherkin. I believe this sentiment is incorrect, and it would be better to express it altered if not halfway reversed: you cannot choose to *stop* being otherkin. We argue and say that you cannot choose to be otherkin, because to be otherkin is to *be* on such an integral level that if such a person were capable of snapping their fingers and becoming, then they must also be able to snap their fingers and unbecome, and were never like the rest of us to begin with.

I was fourteen years old, and I chose to follow a path in the astral plane that I had no way of knowing the outcome of. When I found myself entrenched in a parallel life and swapping places with an airship captain in the middle of the war, I chose to hold on, to swap over and over again, live her life while she lived mine. And until the Champion locked the doors and I could no longer reach her, I chose again and again to go back. I could have refused. I could have stopped. I could have said “No, thank you, the taste I've gotten of your world is enough, and I'd like to stay in mine now, for good.”

Tell me. What is the difference between a dragon who splits from a human's form like a butterfly fresh from the chrysalis, and a dragon who was once a human that took a transformation potion for which an antidote doesn't exist? One can argue history, and knowledge, and the fact that one can be sure they'll never return to human form, and the other will always be wondering if someone will slip an antidote into their drink. But if neither ever tells you how they ended up a dragon, if you are allowed to assume both were hatched from dragon eggs... could you really tell the difference between them? Even if you could, would it matter what the answer was?

The Champion locked the doors, and he stopped me from ever stepping back into his world, leaving Ranisson forever wondering how the Evillious Chronicles were going to end. I crossed over, and I was her as she was me, and then the doors were locked, and our connection to each other was broken. The parallel life was over. I do not know what she's been up to since the summer of 2016, and I never will again. I'm not her as she is now: but I *was* her as she was then.

And maybe it wouldn't be a fictotype if all it left me with was the scars and the knowledge that only I would know what had happened. When the doors locked, I no longer had a choice. I sobbed for days, weeks,

and part of me is sobbing still, six years later: part of me is still in Lore. Part of me is still listening to the sounds of a battleground and the gunfire over the airship radios. Much of me is still Chaos, because the Champion used it to bring me to his world, and I will never be free of his magic. I will never want to be free, not really. Even on the days it hurts, even on the days where I want nothing more than to be free, I'd never be able to force myself to close the door for good any more than I could cut off my own arm because of a passing whim.

I chose once, to keep going back. I chose to not refuse the Champion until he locked the doors on me. I never actively chose it. I never stopped and said, "this I choose to do." I couldn't tell you exactly when my decisions were no longer reversible, when I had passed the point of no return. What I can tell you is that the doors are locked, I am six years past the ending of a parallel life, I can never go home, and I can never stop *being*. Until the day I die, and maybe after that, I will still *be*. I may one day be a century away from the Champion's call and I will still know myself wholly and entirely as the lost teenager he brought into his world.

The community argues and says you can't choose a kintype, that you either *are* or are *not*. There is no becoming, there is only awakening to what was always there, unnoticed and unchangeable. I can see the logic, but the sentiment they're trying to express is not the same as the one they speak. To *be* means not to have always been, but to never again *not be*. Someone who takes a transformation potion is still a dragon, regardless of how they got that way. Even if there was an antidote: if they would refuse the offer of it every day until the day they died, are they not a dragon on that conviction alone?

We are scared, so many of us, at the idea that someone could dress up and say they *are* when they don't mean it. The key is and has always been the conviction, even the Silver Elves agree: if you wish to walk every day the path of the elf, and you refuse all other paths, can anyone say you're not an elf? It's not about how you ended up on the path. It's not about whether you were transformed into a dragon as you were conceived or later on. It's not about whether you're ever offered the chance to go to another world.

It's about the conviction to stay, to refuse all other options. It's about the conviction that you *are*.

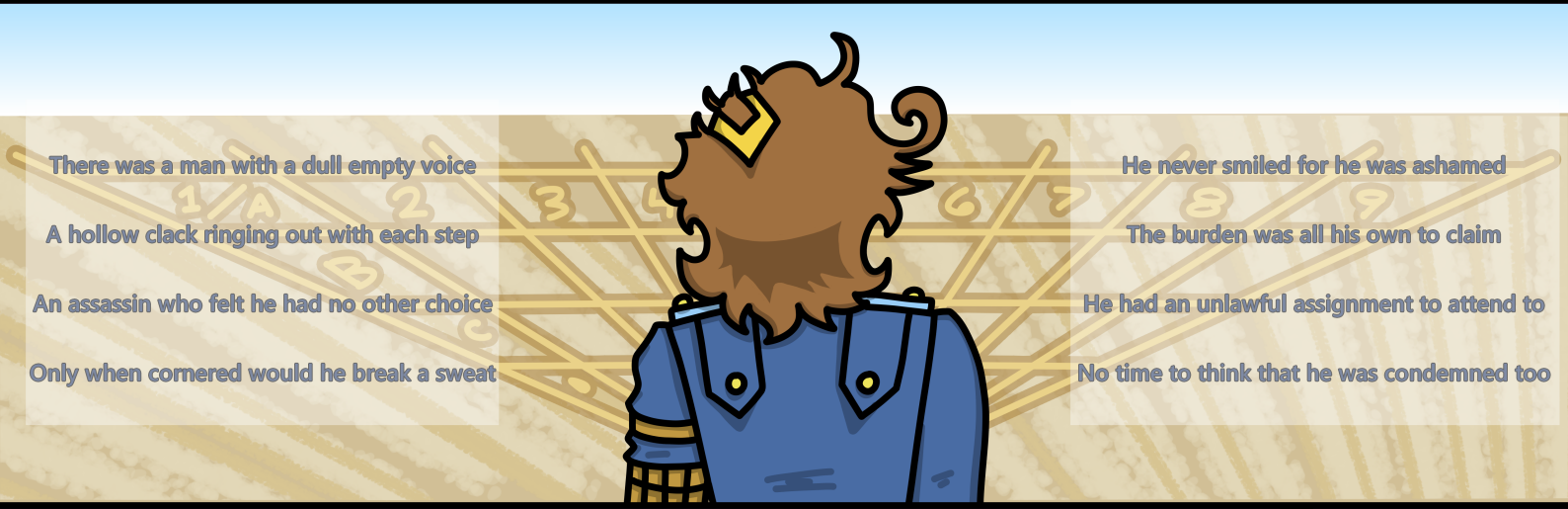
-Pale 'Ranisson' Greenwood, Captain of the Night Emerald, under the banner of Drakath's Chaos

written for the From Fictionkind zine, December '22



There was a person who began to doubt
If they spelt blonde with an e
Or if instead should spell blond without
Nobody around could agree

As they battled for a prize
Everything slipping from their eyes
All that they needed in the end
Was themselves and their true friends



There was a man with a dull empty voice
A hollow clack ringing out with each step
An assassin who felt he had no other choice
Only when cornered would he break a sweat

He never smiled for he was ashamed
The burden was all his own to claim
He had an unlawful assignment to attend to
No time to think that he was condemned too



There was a creature born of evil
Who only wanted a start a new life
Hating that his existence was illegal
Hiding in shadows with sorrow and strife

Though at any moment he could explode
There were small beauties to behold
And even still he found people to love
Before he was captured and disposed of



There is a person here standing before you
That's me in the present speaking now
These memories & more in my brain like a tattoo
I have them even if I'm not sure how

These people, these pasts
Their lives play like broadcasts
They aren't who am I now
But they once were anyhow

DIGGING UP DAGGERS

BY ELISE RHETT

noun: archaeologist; plural noun: archaeologists

I am a girl with five or six different names that aren't mine. I picked most of them, rolled them around like big ripe sweet peaches from a Virginia orchard I can only half remember, wished they would rot. I make accounts just to hide my real name, and I hope I don't look too recognisable; it feels too easy to tell everyone that my name is Elise, and I came from this place, and I am here to help. Fruit juice dribbles down my chin and tastes like sawdust.

I have been here as long as we, my group and I, can remember, and I am the only one who remembers me being somewhere else before. Psychologically I understand the concept of pseudomemory; from the Greek ψευδής, *pseudes, lying, false*, which I remember being able to read easier than I could English but which sits on the page as incomprehensible as some ancient runic script, like I am an archaeologist in my own mind, searching in the dirt for artifacts of memory and finding only peach pits and fragments. I have trouble spelling because I still think I am dyslexic, even though I know it is disrespectful to believe I have a disability that our body doesn't, even though I know everything about me is a liability and to be ashamed of, believe me, I know. My headmates don't like calling me Annabeth because they don't want to encourage me to go digging deeper. I wish I could go home. I wish any of this meant something.

I called our mother my step-mom once. I didn't really mean to - but I had gotten too comfy and dared to believe I might be real, and my memories were always sitting at the tip of my tongue if I wasn't careful. Some of my headmates are ashamed of them because they think I am 'cringe' and it stings, a little, but I try keep my head up and stay curious and keep learning. When our dad ruffles my hair, which is darker than I remember, I want to ask him about biplanes. He's a chemical engineer, though - not a history professor. He speaks in an Australian accent. When I was thinking up surnames so I wouldn't have to be *Chase* any more (and maybe, if I wasn't a Chase, I could keep *Annabeth* and people would overlook it), I wanted to be a Major or a Rembrandt or a Rhett, and I kept sounding them out in our round-voweled voice, wincing at its pitch

and accent, feeling vicious dissonance between how they sounded in my head and issuing from our throat. I can't speak in my own accent but I think in it, and *Rembrandt* is a lot less compelling when our tongue can barely handle the consonant clusters.

Sometimes it is very hard to remember who I am, or that I am here for a reason, or that I am important and true and real. Here are some things that people have told me I am:

- Honest
- An ANP
- Clever
- A Virgo
- An overachiever
- A fictional character
- Naive
- Not a very good writer
- A part of someone else's brain
- ψευδής - *lying, false*, or maybe ψυδρός, *deceived*. I promise I'm not doing it on purpose.

I think I might be a little bit made up. Every picture that looks like me is from 2016, and I am trying very hard to change how I look so I don't have to point at fanart when people ask *What colour are your eyes*, and my friend Ariadne, from inside - no relation to the myth - rubs my back in soothing circles and says I can be anybody I want to be. Sometimes I'm older and sometimes I'm small, and I really think our brain picked the most useless version of me to introject - what use am I if I'm twelve years old most of the time, you know? Seven sometimes. Sixteen is the oldest I've managed. Ariadne says that it doesn't matter how useful I am, and fae loves me because I'm here and that's all that matters, and I want to ask *Would you still love me if I wanted to go home?*, and I never say it out loud but fae hears me anyway, and whispers "Of course I would, sweetheart, I would love you no matter what your name was", and I think this must be what having a big sister is like. I never really had one. Some of the girls in Athena cabin were older than me, but I was too focused and too solemn and the cabin counselor by the time I was about nine and none of them even knew what my last name was, or that I liked biplanes and engineering and used to want to be an aircraft mechanic, before I read about Icarus, grandson of

Athena, and what became of him when he tried to fly. And even when I am front, my brain spins memories like a spider web - and I panic if I see a spider, which none of my headmates share, and surely I can't make that up? Surely it means some part of me is real? A friend told me that *memories are real to you in the sense that they've helped shape who you are, like how a vivid nightmare can leave you shaken for days, but deeper*, and I feel shaken to my bones. Like Poseidon has made the earth shudder in my sleep. Like I am my mother, being born from someone else's mind fully adorned with spear and shield and cleverness. But all of that is made up, people tell me. My headmates don't believe in the gods, and even if I want to, even if I write prayers to Athena and cleanse myself nightly, she will never take me back as her daughter. I know. I promise I know.

Who would take me? Who would want me, given the chance?

It's easy to slip into memory when this shared skin hurts: I know, I know I've endured worse, even if it's a lie. Certainly we have chronic pain none of my headmates will admit to, but what's that when I'd taken cyclopes' blows to the head before I was eight? When I knew magma and poisoned blades and the heartache that was siren song? The hurting isn't what appeals, though. Throbbing through a haze of muscle aches and misty memory - are softer times. Beyond that veil, that Mist, I remember strawberry fields and low hunched hills and the smell of camp at dusk with the tide coming in, and the thrill of eureka and the depths of knowledge and the euphoria of being understood that I'd found in Cabin Six, and I remember the crows' feet at the corner of my father's deep-set rusty eyes and the salt-pepper-gold spray of his thinning hair and the way, when I was much younger, he would pick me up and wheel me around and tell me I was flying. I'm not allowed to love illusions like this, surely - I'm meant to be clever and incisive, right, see through the fakes and the haze and the Mist with owls' grey eyes - but I want to, I want to remember it, I want to be the girl with a Virginia-rounded accent and messy curls and something bright in her eyes like the bronze of her blade. "You are," Ariadne would tell me if sol was here. Sol's sleeping right now. Practising compassion, sol told us, even for sunself, *and you, Elise, could learn from that, I bet. Anyone you want to be, sol would tell me.*

Even if I wanted to be deceived?

It's not a lie. It's love. I don't know who said that, but it rings fiercely true. I remember honesty and compassion and *trying* so hard I couldn't breathe with it, I remember hope and boldness and the wild brash curiosity that came with hubris, and I remember being our younger selves, seeing this hope, this love, filling with it. I remember wanting to live. Anix, that bright spark of a headmate, thinks I'm clever, and Jamie wants to keep me safe, and Wes says I'm like his little sister, and - and Aurelia ruffles my hair like my father used to. I saturate us, I'm true and real in that way. I taste like sweet peach juice on our tongue and the kidlike glee you get when it makes your face messy.

Who'd take me? "We would," Wes says, a soft voice back-of-mind, only-half-front, sending a fuzzy flush of love through us. And I say *why* and the first thing that comes back is "there doesn't need to be a why" and the second, a different voice, light soothing true-real-honest, "Because you're made of love and it shows." Made of hope. Sure the dissonance is painful, sends me shivering out of our skin - it reminds me of that other part of me, of those fruit orchards - but in some way it's like a home. I like mysteries, you see. I like figuring things out that aren't meant to be understood, and challenging established truths, and inverting the ways things have always been done because I'm sure I can do it better. *Dysphoria* translates to *unable to bear* so I am going to bear it. *Pseudos* means *false* so I am going to lend it an ear, to learn from those memories, to go home when I'm scared like I always wished I could.

We bleached our hair blonde like mine. It is a different length than I'm used to, but I think I like the dissonance: it reminds me who I am. Annabeth, Elise, take your pick. Just know I have feet in two worlds and a spark in my eye, and the gods of this earth aren't ready for the glory I'll bring.

P.S. Anix says that's a bit melodramatic. I told him I deserve it.

Finding Love in Kin

by Sun, 2022

It was a few years ago now, and I don't know exactly when it was, but I met my boyfriend whom I plan to marry on Tumblr. I think he followed or interacted with me on a sideblog of his, but I can't remember which. He kinned a certain character that I also kinned, and, at the time, although I had kinned for a while, I was new to kinning publicly. I had just been introduced to the idea of being involved in kin communities by some friends of mine, and it suddenly made everything make so much sense, but that's a different story. I'll be calling my boyfriend "Moon" during this informal ramble piece for simplicity since he was not my boyfriend during every event in this.

I had told Moon that he could block or unfollow me for his comfort, because I was a double of his kin and didn't want it to bother him. But he said he didn't mind at all and actually liked doubles a lot! In retrospect, he was probably being polite, or at least, both of us hadn't gotten so far into kinning that doubles had bothered us yet, but regardless, we started talking. At first, we only talked a little bit, and then a major life event happened for Moon and I didn't hear from him for a bit. I worried, but tried to not worry too much, since we weren't too close yet. After he came back online, we exchanged Discord contact information, and started talking there.

We started talking a LOT after that...we talked about pretty much everything. Moon became the first person that I'd say good morning and good night to every single day. Eventually, we made our own Discord server that was just for the two of us, which let us have a lot of freedom in organizing our messages, creative content, and more.

Throughout the time we had known each other, fictional characters had always been incredibly important to us. Although we both kin outside of fictionkin, it is ultimately the focus of our experience as otherkin. As we became closer and closer, part of what would drive us to bond further is how we discussed fictional characters and fictional worlds. We would talk about scenarios for characters, what-if's, and so much more. We became so connected to fictional characters and how we discovered those characters' lives together.

We both had a few fiction kintypes early on, but not too many. But becoming close with Moon drove me to realize I had begun to feel genuine connections to the romantic partners he had had in past lives, and he felt the same way about my partners. We weren't dating yet, but I had begun to kinfirm a few of his romantic partners and he a few of mine. We were nervous about being sure or confident that we shared kin canons at first, but something about not sharing kin canons just felt so wrong to me. I wanted to be every love Moon had in his past lives, and I didn't know why yet. Something in me just had this intrinsic feeling that if Moon had someone in his past life, then that was me.

He eventually confessed that he was in love with me, which suddenly made a lot of things make more sense—why I wanted to kiss him, marry him, and why I felt like I was always his partner, no matter the life. We began dating, but using that word doesn't feel serious enough. We've been together for several years, and although we're not engaged, we truly do plan to be engaged one day.

I fell in love through otherkin and without it, I would have never been able to fall in love, let alone with Moon. We use a word that is used in otherkin communities to describe our relationship with otherkin—soulbonded. We consider ourselves soulmates, but outside of that, relating to kin specifically, our lives, our souls, are bonded romantically across all of our lives. I am forever grateful to otherkin for many reasons, but the main one to me will always be allowing me to meet my Moon.



Take to Heart

Our values, memories, relationships and the way we view our reality -- the legacy of everything we were and are affect what we will be.

Being a guardian is not something in the past, but an ongoing story and personal truth.

My noemata are the building materials as I build my future.

"A legend is a story that you begin to feel in your gizzard and then over time it becomes true in your heart. And perhaps makes you become a better owl."

- *The Capture*



Legacy

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